

Special Research Grants Program Potato Breeding Research

FY 2010 Request for Applications

APPLICATION DEADLINE: January 20, 2010



U.S. Department of Agriculture

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

SPECIAL RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM, POTATO BREEDING RESEARCH

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200, Grants for Agricultural Research, Special Research Grants.

DATES: Complete, error-free applications must be received in Grants.gov by **January 20, 2010 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding. The agency strongly encourages applicants to submit applications well before the deadline to allow time for correction of technical errors identified by Grants.gov. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) requests comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 USC 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this notice, above.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy and Oversight Branch; Office of Extramural Programs; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: RFP-OEP@nifa.usda.gov (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms). In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Special Research Grants Program, Potato Research RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA announces the availability of grant funds and requests applications for the Special Research Grants Program, Potato Breeding Research (Potato Research) for fiscal year (FY) 2010 to facilitate or expand ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research programs. The amount available for support of this program in FY 2010 is approximately \$1,300,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for Potato Research projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a Potato Research grant. NIFA additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

The authority for this program is contained in subsection (c)(1)(B) of section 2 of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, Pub. L. No. 89-106, as amended (7 USC 450i(c)(1)(B)). Administrative guidance is provided in 7 CFR 3430, the Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions and Program-Specific Administrative Provisions for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

In accordance with the statutory authority, grants awarded under this program will be for the purpose of facilitating or expanding ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research programs that: (i) Promote excellence in research on a regional and national level; (ii) promote the development of regional research centers; (iii) promote the research partnership between the Department of Agriculture, colleges and universities, research foundations, and State agricultural experiment stations for regional research efforts; and (iv) facilitate coordination and cooperation of research among States through regional research grants.

The statutory time limitation for awards issued under this authority is three (3) years. No award may exceed this statutory time limitation.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The purpose of this grant program is to support potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) research programs that focus on varietal development and testing and potato varieties for commercial production. As used herein, varietal development and testing is research using traditional and biotechnological genetics to develop improved potato varieties. Aspects of evaluation, screening and testing must support variety development.

C. Program Area Description

Approximately \$1,300,000 is available to fund four to five Potato Research applications in FY 2010. Proposals should be submitted for a one-year project period.

The Potato Research Program funds projects that have a high potential for success in varietal development and testing using traditional and biotechnological genetics to develop potato varieties with a high value to the potato industry as a whole. Priority will be given to proposed projects demonstrating experienced staff, adequate facilities and equipment, a multi-institutional, multi-state approach, and finally, evidence of stakeholder participation in developing project objectives and plans for implementation.

Examples of previously funded projects can be found on the NIFA Current Research Information System (CRIS) – [Potato Research](#).

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. Approximately \$1,300,000 is available to fund applications in FY 2010.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2010, applications may be submitted to the Potato Research Program as one of the following three types of requests:

(1) **New application**. This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the Potato Research Program. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

(2) **Renewal application**. This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain a Progress Report (see Project Narrative, Part IV.B.3.b). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate areas to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

(3) **Resubmitted application**. This is an application that had previously been submitted to the Potato Research Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV.B.3.e.). Resubmitted applications received by the relevant due dates will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in the appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

Each proposal submitted in FY 2010 shall request funding for a period not to exceed one year. FY 2010 awardees will need to recompete in future years for additional funding, subject to the availability of funding.

D. Scientific Peer Review

Subsection (c)(5) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act, as amended (7 USC 450i(c)(5)) requires applicants to conduct scientific peer review of their proposed research activities in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary prior to the Secretary making a grant award under this authority. Regulations implementing this requirement are set forth in 7 CFR part 3400.20. The regulations impose the following requirements:

(1) **Scientific peer review.** Prior to the award of a standard or continuation grant by NIFA, any proposed project shall have undergone a review arranged by the grantee. For research projects, such review must be a scientific peer review conducted in accordance with 7 CFR 3400.21.

(2) **Credible and independent review.** A review arranged by the grantee must provide for a credible and independent assessment of the proposed project. A credible review is one that provides an appraisal of technical quality and relevance sufficient for an organizational representative to make an informed judgment as to whether the proposal is appropriate for submission for Federal support. To provide for an independent review, such review may include USDA employees, but should not be conducted solely by USDA employees.

(3) **Notice of completion and retention of records.** A notice of completion of the review, signed by the Authorized Representative, shall be conveyed in writing to NIFA as part of the Other Attachments (Field 11. of the R&R Other Project Information Form)(See Part IV,B.,3.,e.,4.). The written notice constitutes certification by the applicant that a review in compliance with these regulations has occurred. Applicants are not required to submit results of the review to NIFA; however, proper documentation of the review process and results should be retained by the applicant. **Please note: award funds may not be issued until the Scientific Peer Review Certification is received.**

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by State agricultural experiment stations, land-grant colleges and universities, research foundations established by land-grant colleges and universities, colleges and universities receiving funds under the Act of October 10, 1962, as amended (16 USC 582a et seq.), and accredited schools or colleges of veterinary medicine.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will preclude NIFA from reviewing the application and making an award.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

NIFA does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria nor will they affect relevance rankings.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) (also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative) (AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see http://www.Grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. In order to access, complete and submit applications, applicants must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov. This software is essential to apply for NIFA Federal assistance awards. For basic system requirements and download instructions, please see http://www.Grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp. To verify that you have a compatible version of Adobe Reader, Grants.gov established a test package that will assist you in making that determination. Grants.gov Adobe Versioning Test Package: <http://www.Grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.Grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-NIFA-SRGP-002716** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov and instructions on how to complete the application forms. **If assistance is needed to access the application package** (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://Grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

Grants.gov customer support

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed [Federal Holidays](#).

Email: support@Grants.gov

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide. ANY PROPOSALS CONTAINING NON-PDF DOCUMENTS WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. With documented prior approval, resubmitted applications will be accepted until close of business on the closing date in the RFA. If you do not own PDF-generating software, Grants.gov provides online tools to assist applicants. Users will find a link to “Convert Documents to PDF” on <http://Grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf>.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

2. R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 6. Project Summary/Abstract. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of Potato Research with a varietal development/testing focus.

b. Field 7. Project Narrative.

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 pages of written text regardless of whether it is single or double spaced, plus up to five additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum (25 pages) has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

- (1) Summary of previous potato research: Provide a brief report giving evidence of previous outputs, outcomes, and impacts, for example,
 - New genes accessed;

- New varieties released, and year;
 - Adoption of new and previous varieties from this program;
 - Income added (or protected) for farmers growing these varieties;
 - New markets accessed;
 - Environmental benefits; and/or
 - Other evidence of outputs, outcomes, and impact.
- (2) Introduction: A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives of the proposed activities should be included. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed project should be included.

In addition, this section should include in-depth information on the following, when applicable:

- i. Describe the general importance of potatoes to the region; be brief. In-depth information should describe specific current issues, challenges and opportunities. Provide estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders, including growers, processors, buyers, and consumers and to ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research. What is the pay-off of this research to producers? To other stakeholders? Proposals should focus on a few major problems, or clearly explain and justify the need to spread effort over multiple traits and issues. When describing potato quality traits: a) Provide a description of what an ideal variety would be for this quality trait; b) State what is involved in breeding to improve the trait, and why; c) State progress toward the desired trait made to date, and why continued work is necessary.
 - ii. Reasons for having the work performed at the proposing institution.
- (3) Objectives: Clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort must be included in all applications.
- (4) Methods: The procedures or methodology to be applied to the proposed effort should be explicitly stated. This section should include but not necessarily be limited to:
- i. A description of stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation, including documentation of participation, or reference to documentation, where appropriate;
 - ii. A description of the proposed project activities in the sequence in which it is planned to carry them out;

- iii. Techniques to be employed, including their feasibility and the rationale for their use in this project;
- iv. Kinds of results (outputs, outcomes, and impacts) expected;
- v. Means by which data will be analyzed or interpreted;
- vi. Pitfalls that might be encountered;
- vii. Limitations to proposed procedures; and
- viii. Plans to commercialize the results, if within this project, or anticipated steps and outlook for commercialization, if beyond the scope of this project.

In proposals involving intellectual property not in the public domain, proposing organizations must indicate whether there is freedom to operate (FtO) and/or any obstacles that might be encountered. Indicate whether cooperators have discussed benefit sharing of expected products of the research.

(5) Cooperation and Institutional Units Involved: Cooperative, multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary applications are encouraged. Identify each institutional unit contributing to the project and designate the lead institution or institutional unit. When appropriate, the project should be coordinated with the efforts of other State and/or national programs. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each institutional partner of the project team. Include a realistic project management plan and timeline that will ensure efficient functioning of the multi-state, multi-institutional team. Include a brief description of how the project will be governed, how decisions will be made, expectations for each project member, short-, medium- and long-term metrics to be evaluated, a mechanism whereby progress can be evaluated for accountability for federal funds, and how the project will complement and/or link to existing programs or projects.

(6) Project Timetable: The application should outline all important phases as a function of time, for the entire project, including periods beyond the grant funding period.

c. Field 9. Facilities & Other Resources. All facilities which are available for use or assignment to the project during the requested period of support should be reported and described briefly.

d. Field 10. Equipment. All items of major equipment or instrumentation available for use or assignment to the proposed project should be itemized. In addition, items of nonexpendable equipment needed to conduct and bring the project to a successful conclusion should be listed, including dollar amounts and, if funds are requested for their acquisition, justified.

e. Field 11. Other Attachments.

- (1) Response to Previous Review. This requirement only applies to “Resubmitted Applications” as described under Part II, B., “Types of Applications”. PDs must respond to the previous review panel summary on no more than one page, titled “RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW.” Please include the previous proposal number, if possible.
- (2) Appendices to Project Narrative. Appendices to the Project Narrative are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. The addition of appendices should not be used to circumvent the text and/or figures and tables page limitations.

NIFA encourages attachment of the following information to the Project Narrative in **all** applications. The information is needed to verify compliance with NEPA requirements. Providing this information in the proposal is *voluntary*, but will expedite the funding process, should the proposal be recommended for funding. The attachment should include the following information:

- Field plot locations (township and state)
 - Field plot sizes (total overall, or plot size x number of plots)
 - Any agricultural chemicals used.
- (3) Collaborative Arrangements. If it will be necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g., signed letter of support) should be provided that the collaborators involved have agreed to render these services. Letters of collaboration must be signed by the respective ARs for both the applicant and the collaborator. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application, such as rate of pay.
 - (4) Scientific Peer Review Certification Documentation. The application must contain a written notice to NIFA that a Scientific Peer Review has been completed (see Part II, D. item 3.). The award may not be issued until the signed Scientific Peer Review Certification is received.

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

5. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award. If completing the information, **do not enter any data in the field requesting the social security number.**

6. R&R Budget

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

7. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 2. Program Code. Enter the program code name “**Potato Research**” and the program code “**AN**”.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Complete, error-free applications must be received in Grants.gov by close of business (COB) **Wednesday January 20, 2010 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding. The agency strongly encourages applicants to submit applications well before the deadline to allow time for correction of technical errors identified by Grants.gov.

Correspondence regarding submitted applications will be sent using e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 15 days of the established deadline, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

NIFA has determined that grant funds awarded under this authority may not be used for renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agriculture Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, 7 USC 3319, indirect costs or tuition remission are not allowable costs under section 2(c)(1)(B) projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose. Further, costs that are a part of an institution's indirect cost pool (e.g., administrative or clerical salaries) may not be reclassified as direct costs for the purpose of making them allowable.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov.”

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

B. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Relevance (25 points)

Relevance and importance of proposed research to specific problems or opportunities regarding the purpose of the grant program as described in Part I, A. and B.; value of expected results for the potato industry in states beyond the states represented by the submitting institution and collaborating institutions.

2. Quality (25 points)

Overall scientific and technical quality of the application and the specific approach proposed.

3. Feasibility (25 points)

Feasibility of attaining objectives; adequacy of training, experience, facilities, and equipment.

4. Participation (25 points)

Application lists more than one state as recipient of funds. (10 points)

Application provides evidence of cooperation or involvement of multiple institutions. (5 points)

Evidence of stakeholder participation, including growers, in developing the project objectives. (5 points)

Plans to involve stakeholders in project implementation or monitoring. (5 points)

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. NIFA will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of NIFA shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of NIFA as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Director during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view NIFA award terms and conditions);

(10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122 (2 CFR Parts 220 and 230), and incorporating provisions of 31 USC 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations (2 CFR Part 215).

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—NIFA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs-- General Award Administrative Provisions.

29 USC 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 USC 200 et seq. —Bayh-Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

1. Expected Program Outputs

It is expected that program outputs will conform to the purpose of the Potato Research grants program. The principal outputs will consist of varietal development and testing using classical methods, or, when appropriate, combinations of new and classical methods; and the development of new potato varieties.

When appropriate to the problems addressed, ancillary or supplemental outputs may include, but are not limited to, improved classical methods, or integrated classical/novel methods, for the component steps in variety development and testing; or, improvements in aspects of efficient provision of desired new varieties to growers.

For informational purposes, the “Federal Financial Report,” Form SF-425, consolidates into a single report the former Financial Status Report (SF-269 and SF-269A) and the Federal Cash Transactions Report (SF-272 and SF-272A). The [NIFA Agency-specific Terms and Conditions](#) include the requirement that Form SF-425 is due on a **quarterly basis no later than 30 days following the end of each reporting period. A final “Federal Financial Report,” Form SF-425, is due 90 days after the expiration date of this award.**

2. Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to NIFA’s Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submission of project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before NIFA funds will be released. Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.nifa.usda.gov>.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Ann Marie Thro, National Program Leader, Plant Breeding and Genomics, National Institute of Food and Agriculture; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2220; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2220; telephone: (202) 401-6702; fax: (202) 401-4888; e-mail: athro@nifa.usda.gov.

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by NIFA without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed three years. Any extension of time shall be contingent upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the

ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 USC chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

Please refer to [7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions](#), for the applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.

For the purpose of this program, the following additional definition is applicable:

Director means the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and any other officer or employee of the NIFA to whom the authority involved is delegated.

Electronic Application Checklist

(Disclaimer Note: This checklist is included for the sole purpose of assisting the applicant in the self review process prior to submission. Applicant should use the RFA as the instrument of instruction and the Application Guide to complete the application process. This checklist is NOT an official portion of the RFA and should in no way be considered a replacement for the Application Guide or instructions contained within the RFA.)

Only electronic applications may be submitted to NIFA via Grants.gov unless indicated otherwise in the specific program Request for Applications (RFA). All applications submitted to NIFA must contain the applicable elements outlined in these guidelines. The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the application is complete prior to submission:

- ☐ **Are you eligible to apply for the funding offered in the RFA?**
Eligibility information for each funding opportunity is stated in Part III, Eligibility Information, of each RFA.
- ☐ **Has your institution properly registered with Grants.gov to enable you to submit an application?**
Those who wish to submit an application to NIFA should first contact their Authorized Representative (AR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit applications through Grants.gov. See http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp for steps to preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.
- ☐ **Are you applying to the correct funding opportunity associated with the RFA?**
Field 1 of the NIFA Supplemental Information Form will pre-populate to indicate the program to which you are applying.
- ☐ **Have you followed the guidelines for filling out your electronic application provided in the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, which is posted along with the SF 424 R&R application package on Grants.gov?**
Electronic applications should be prepared according to this guide and the specific program RFA. This guide is part of the corresponding electronic application package for the specific program to which you are applying.
- ☐ **Have all attachments been submitted in the portable document format (PDF)?**
NIFA will only accept PDF attachments. See Part III of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.
- ☐ **Do all submitted PDF documents have one-inch margins and are typed or word processed using no type smaller than 12 point regardless of line spacing? Are all PDF documents numbered sequentially on each page of the attachment? Are all page limitations for a given attachment followed?**
Submitted proposals that do not meet these requirements for PDF attachments may not be reviewed.
- ☐ **Did you use the “Check Package for Errors” feature (see section 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide)?**
- ☐ **Have all required components of the SF 424 Research and Related (R&R) Application Package posted under the funding opportunity on Grants.gov been completed?**
 - Mandatory Forms?
 - Optional Forms?

SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

- ☐ Have all required fields (highlighted in yellow) been completed?

R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)

- ☐ Have all required fields (highlighted in yellow) been completed?

R&R Other Project Information

- ☐ Have the fields describing project potential or actual environmental impact been properly completed?

Project Summary/Abstract

- ☐ Has the Project Summary PDF been attached to this form in Field 6?
- ☐ Are the names and affiliated organizations of all Project Directors listed at the top of the page in addition to the title of the project?
- ☐ Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations?
- ☐ Did you use the suggested Project Summary/Abstract Template found at:
http://www.nifa.usda.gov/home/faq_apply.html#abstract?

Project Narrative

- ☐ Has the Project Narrative PDF been attached to this form in Field 7?
- ☐ Was a progress report included, if submitting a renewal?
- ☐ Is the project fully described?
- ☐ Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations?

Bibliography & References Cited

- ☐ Has the Bibliography & References Cited PDF been attached to this form in Field 8?
- ☐ Are all references cited and are all citations referenced?
- ☐ Do all citations contain a title, the names of all authors, and are they in accepted journal format?

Facilities & Other Resources

- ☐ Has the Facilities & Other Resources PDF been attached to this form in Field 9?
- ☐ Has a description of your facilities, sufficient to indicate that you will be able to carry out this project, been given?

Equipment

- ☐ Has the Equipment PDF been attached to this form in Field 10?
- ☐ Is the description of your equipment sufficient to indicate that you will be able to carry out this project?

Response to Previous Review (for resubmitted applications)

- ☐ Has the Response to Previous Review PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?
- ☐ Has the application been clearly and meaningfully revised and are the revisions briefly described?
- ☐ Are comments from the previous review addressed?

Appendices to Project Description

- ☐ Has the Appendices to Project Description PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?

Collaborative Arrangements

- ☐ Has the Collaborative Arrangements PDF been attached to this form in Field 11?

Scientific Peer Review Certification

- ☐ Has a Scientific Peer Review Certification letter, signed by the AR been attached in Field 11?

R&R Senior/Key Person Profile

Biographical Sketch

- ☐ Has the biographical sketch (vitae) PDF for the PD and each co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel been attached?

Current and Pending Support

- ☐ Has the current and pending support PDF for key personnel been attached?
- ☐ Have all current and pending projects been listed and summarized, **including this proposal**?
- ☐ Did you use the suggested Current and Pending Support Template found at:
http://www.nifa.usda.gov/home/faq_apply.html#current?

R&R Personal Data (voluntary)

- ☐ Have all fields been completed, except social security number?

R&R Budget

- ☐ Have all fields been completed for each PD and co-PD(s)?
- ☐ For multi-institution applications, has a subaward budget been included for each institution involved?

Budget Justification

- ☐ Has the Budget Justification PDF been attached to this form in Field K?
- ☐ Are budget items individually justified?
- ☐ For multi-institutional applications, has a subaward budget justification been included for each institution involved?

NIFA Supplemental Information Form

- ☐ Has Field 1 been pre-populated?
- ☐ Does Field 2 indicate the Program Code Name and Program Code to which you are applying?

Conflict of Interest List

- ☐ Has the Conflict of Interest List PDF been attached to this form in Field 8?
- ☐ Has a Conflict of Interest List been provided for all individuals who have submitted a Biographical Sketch?
- ☐ Did you use the suggested Conflict of Interest Template found at:
http://www.nifa.usda.gov/home/faq_apply.html#coi?
- ☐ Does the Conflict of Interest list include the four categories as appropriate?